

August 8 2005 - Slaughter Calls on Cheney's Chief of Staff to Fully Cooperate in CIA Leak ...

Slaughter Calls on Cheney's Chief of Staff to Fully Cooperate in CIA Leak Investigation

House Democrats ask Scooter Libby to grant special waiver to jailed reporter.

Washington, DC - Rep. Louise M. Slaughter (D-NY), Ranking Member of the House Rules Committee, today joined with Reps. Conyers, Holt and Hinchey in sending a letter to Vice President Dick Cheney's Chief of Staff, Scooter Libby, asking that he fully cooperate with the ongoing grand jury investigation into the White House leak of Valerie Wilson's identity as a covert CIA operative.

New York Times reporter Judith Miller continues to serve jail time after refusing to testify about certain details of the CIA leak case. Additionally, recent reports have confirmed that Mr. Libby spoke with Judith Miller about Mrs. Wilson's covert status several days before Robert Novak first wrote the column revealing her identity to the world.

Karl Rove recently granted a special waiver to TIME reporter Matthew Cooper, allowing him to speak with the grand jury about his sources in the developing scandal. In their letter, Rep. Slaughter and her colleagues ask Mr. Libby to give his full cooperation and grant a similar waiver for Judith Miller.

Rep. Slaughter stated, "The nation deserves the White House's full cooperation on this matter. That is what the President promised and the American people should expect nothing less."

She continued, "All Mr. Libby has to do is grant Judith Miller a special waiver. By not doing so, he is impeding the investigation and turning a blind eye on the President's order that the White House fully cooperate."

The text of the letter follows:

August 8, 2005

Mr. I. Lewis Libby

Chief of Staff

Office of the Vice President

The White House

Washington, DC

Dear Mr. Libby:

As you are aware, in the matter of the ongoing investigation of the leaking of the covert status of a Central Intelligence Agency operative (Valerie Wilson), the President has promised that his Administration will "fully cooperate" with the investigation. I am concerned that your conduct may have fallen far short of the President's pledge of full cooperation. This is particularly important because the President has said he would only fire someone who actually committed a crime; your refusal to waive Ms. Miller's pledge of confidentiality is impeding the full cooperation that could lead to such an administrative sanction. I ask you to rectify this by immediately issuing a personal waiver to New York Times reporter Judith Miller and any other reporter with whom you discussed Mrs. Wilson.

It has been over two years since Robert Novak wrote his column outing Mrs. Wilson as a covert CIA operative on weapons of mass destruction. Mr. Novak noted that he had discussed Mrs. Wilson's classified role at the CIA with "senior administration officials."

New information has come to light that indicates that you met with New York Times reporter Judith Miller on July 8, 2003, and discussed Mrs. Wilson. Because this meeting took place six days before columnist Robert Novak was first to report the identity of the covert CIA operative, Special Prosecutor Patrick J. Fitzgerald has reportedly determined that it may well be relevant to the ongoing probe. However, according to the same report, his investigation has been impeded by your lack of cooperation, specifically your failure to produce a personal waiver to Ms. Miller. Indeed, in a March 2005 filing with the court hearing the case, Mr. Fitzgerald stated he could not close the matter because of Ms. Miller's inability to testify about conversations with senior government officials. In response to similar concerns expressed by Mr. Fitzgerald about Time reporter Matthew Cooper, Karl Rove, the Deputy White House Chief of Staff, granted a personal waiver to Mr. Cooper. Your failure to grant such a waiver to Ms. Miller has apparently led her to refuse to testify about her conversation(s) with you and, in turn, led to her recent incarceration for civil contempt.

Only your willingness to step forward and permit Ms. Miller to testify about your July 8 meeting and any other communications with her will allow the whole truth to be known. I urge you to immediately and publicly rectify this by issuing a personal waiver to Ms. Miller.

I look forward to your immediate response. Please reply through the Judiciary Committee Democratic office, 2142 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, DC 20515 (tel: 202-225-6504; fax: 202-225-4423).

Sincerely,